



DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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Section 2: Classification	Revision Date:
Signature: /s/ by Director Rick Day 3/20/98	Effective Date: July 1, 1998

I. POLICY:

It is the policy of the Montana Department of Corrections to utilize, where practical, a unit management system in its facilities in order to decentralize authority, more effectively deliver programs and staff services to offenders, and oversee the operation of the housing areas.

II. AUTHORITY:

53-1-203, MCA. Power and Duties of the Department of Corrections

III. DEFINITIONS:

Counselor, for the purpose of this policy, means individuals who perform case management duties in an offender housing unit.

A **unit** is a self-contained living area, generally housing not more than 200 offenders, that includes both housing for offenders and office space for unit staff.

IV. PROCEDURES:

To the extent that resources permit, each facility will be organized under a system of unit management that facilitates staff/offender contacts to the greatest degree practical.

A. **Unit Team**

Each unit will be staffed by a unit team made up of the employees who work in the unit and who are directly responsible for the offenders living in that unit. Representatives of

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other programs and services may sit as ad hoc team members. Staff offices will be located in the unit so employees and offenders are accessible to each other.

B. Unit staff may include:

1. a Unit Manager
2. a Shift Supervisor/leader
3. Case Manager(s): at least one for every 100 adult offenders
4. Counselor(s): at least one counselor for every 50 adult offenders, and one for every 25 juvenile offenders
5. Support staff, and
6. Correctional Officers/Direct Care staff.

C. The unique needs of the offender population may dictate that more or less staff be assigned to a particular unit based on the security, program, treatment or other needs of a unit.

D. Team Responsibilities

Offenders are assigned to a specific unit team when they receive their housing assignment. Team members are available to assist in many areas, including program planning, classification questions, parole matters, release planning, personal and family problems, and counseling. Unit team members should be scheduled so that one of them will be available at most times when offenders are not working or in programs.

1. The Unit Manager (or similar position) is in charge of the unit and oversees all unit programs and activities. The Unit Manager maintains a close working relationship with all facility departments and personnel, and may be considered a member of the facility management team. The Unit Manager chairs the unit team and reviews all team decisions, and oversees sanitation and other on-unit programs.

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2. The Shift Supervisor supervises the activities of officers and offenders in the day-to-day operations of the unit, and is responsible for the overall security, safety, and orderly operation of the unit for his or her shift.

3. The Case Manager (or similar position) is typically assigned to an offender at the time of unit assignment. The Case Manager is responsible for all casework and many social services functions, prepares classification and parole reports, assists offenders with release plans, and processes offender-related correspondence and other materials relating to the offender's commitment. The Case Manager serves as the primary contact point between the offender, the administration, and the community.

4. The Unit Counselor (or similar position) is a trained staff member who provides social services such as counseling and guidance for the offenders of the unit in areas of institutional conduct, personal difficulties, and planning for the future. Counselors will visit offender work and program assignments regularly and are the first resource for offenders in resolving daily problems, as well as for crisis counseling.

5. The Support Staff performs clerical and administrative duties.

6. Correctional Officers / Direct Care staff have direct responsibility for the day-to-day supervision of offenders and the enforcement of rules and regulations. They have safety, security, and sanitation responsibilities in the unit. Unit officers are in regular contact with offenders in the units and are encouraged to establish professional relationships.

7. A Casework Supervisor position may be established as a specialty position to provide technical oversight of the Case Manager's performance. This individual may supervise

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Case Managers, and may serve in an advisory and consultant role to unit staff. Unit Managers may also serve this function.

E. Communications

The primary means of communication in the unit management system is personal contacts between staff and offenders. Unit staff will maintain bulletin boards with written information that may be of interest to offenders. Unit Managers may utilize group and individual meetings, at their discretion, to improve communications in the unit.

F. Team Reviews

Reviews of offender cases may be held by the team for initial classification of offenders after all orientation and testing are complete. Reviews will be held to adjust programs or work assignments, review transfer or custody reduction requests, and gather the information necessary for reports to the paroling authority. Offenders will be provided with a written advisement of each team action.

G. Appeals

Local policy will establish the process by which offenders may appeal unit team actions.

V. CLOSING:

Questions concerning this policy shall be directed to facility unit managers.